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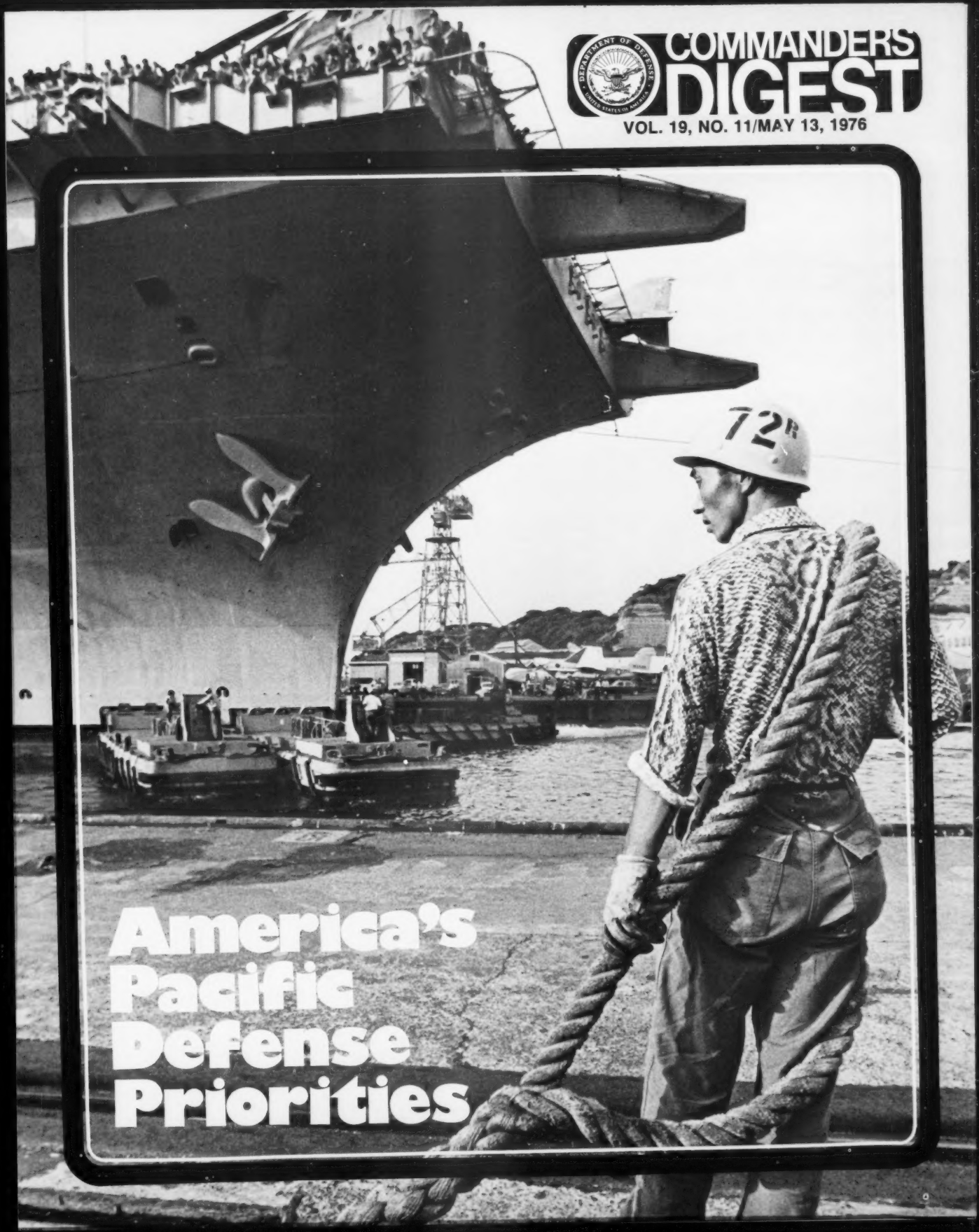
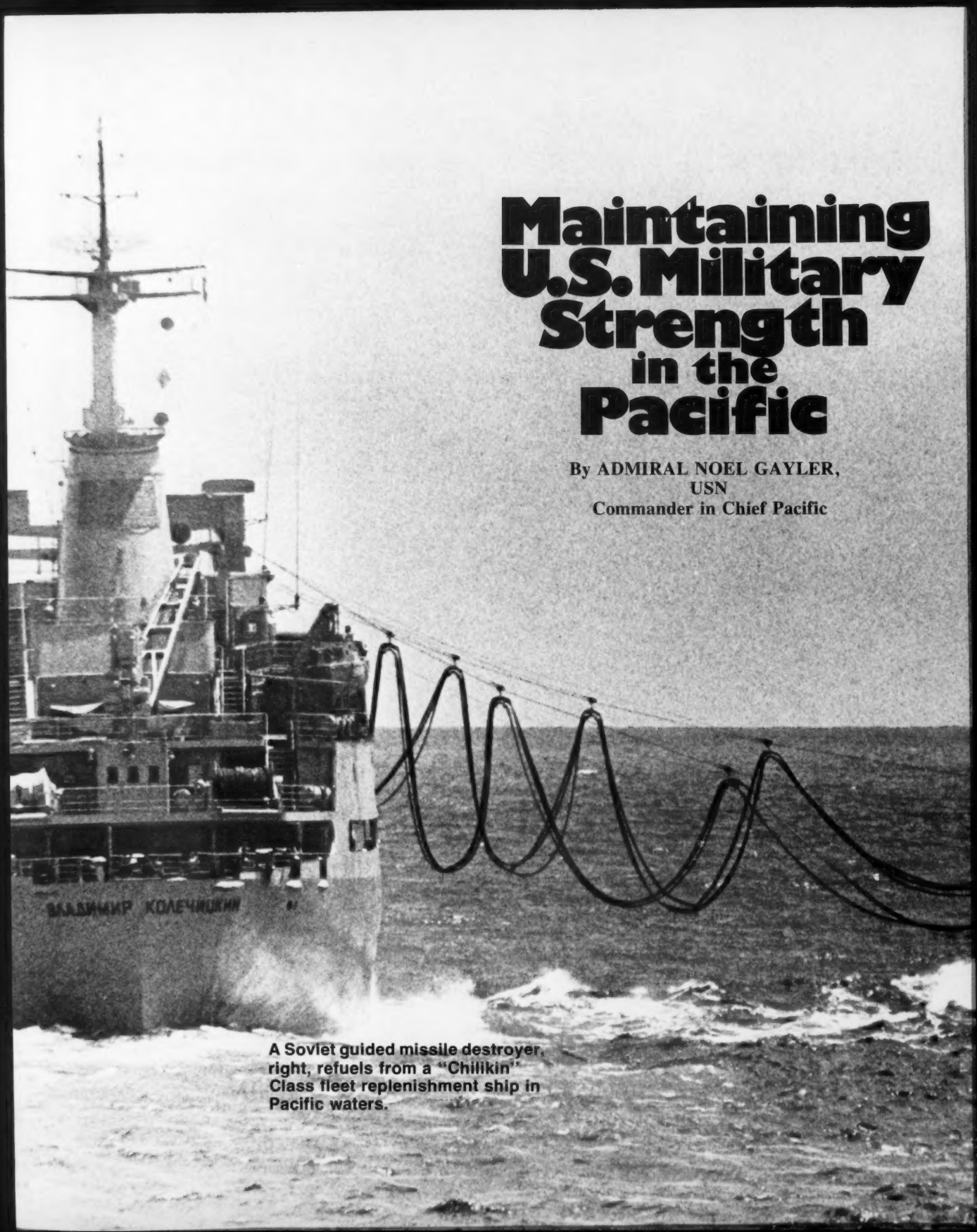


America's Pacific Defense Priorities

Maintaining U.S. Military Strength in the Pacific

By ADMIRAL NOEL GAYLER,
USN
Commander in Chief Pacific



A Soviet guided missile destroyer, right, refuels from a "Chilikin" Class fleet replenishment ship in Pacific waters.

The Pacific and Indian Oceans are a vast and complex area. The Pacific Theater now extends from the western coast of the Americas to the eastern coast of Africa and includes all American forces of whatever Service.

It's helpful to think about the Pacific Theater as six great regions:

- America
- Pacific Oceania, with the State of Hawaii in the middle of it and a bridge to both the ocean cultures and to the cultures of the Far East
- Australasia (Australia, New Zealand)
- Maritime Soviet Russia (the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics has two ends, and the Pacific end is also very important in the military sense as well as in many other ways)
- Asia (Northeast Asia, China, Southeast Asia, South Asia)
- The Indian Ocean (South Asia again, the Middle East and East Africa).

In all of the countries in this region, political consciousness — almost unprecedented political consciousness — is increasing. Nationalism also is very strong. The consequence of rivalries, the consequence of the gap between what they are likely to have and what they would hope to have, this renewed ethnic and national consciousness, and the impact of the new Communist technologies of control — all mean that we can expect strife in this part of the world unless we and others can effectively dampen it down.

So from the standpoint of importance, from the standpoint of change, from the standpoint of danger, from the standpoint of opportunity, this is an enormously important part of the world. Quite simply, it is where two-thirds of the human race lives.

PACOM's Pacific Role

CINCPAC Seal

The Pacific Command (PACOM), as now structured, has evolved through the gradual consolidation of various commands in the Pacific and Far East.

Prior to World War II, the Pacific theater of operations was commanded by scattered components of the Army and Navy. As the United States and its allies fought the Japanese to maintain a foothold in this crucial area, the need for a unified fighting force grew increasingly evident.

A short-lived unified command of American, British, Dutch and Australian forces (ABDACOM) was followed by the establishment of two unified Pacific Commands in March 1942. Two men, destined for greatness, were placed at their helms: General Douglas M. MacArthur, USA, was appointed Supreme Commander of the Southwest Pacific Area, which comprised the East Indies (less Sumatra), the Philippines. Australia, the Bismark Archipelago, and the Solomons; Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, USN, was made Commander in Chief of the Pacific Ocean Areas which contained virtually every area not under MacArthur.

A post World War II Pacific Command was formed on Jan. 1, 1947, when three unified commands were formed for the Pacific area. In addition to PACOM, under Admiral John W. Towers, USN, Commander in Chief Pacific (CINCPAC), there were the Far East Command (CINCFE) with MacArthur as commander in chief, and the Alaska Command under Major General H.C. Graig, USA.

On July 1, 1957, CINCPAC absorbed the duties and responsibilities of CINCFE, and that command was disestablished. At the same time, individual Service component commands for the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines in the Pacific were established with headquarters in Honolulu, Hawaii. Because of the magnitude of CINCPAC's unified command responsibilities, he was relieved from direct command of the Pacific Fleet. On Oct. 26, 1957, the CINCPAC staff moved to its present headquarters at Camp H.M. Smith, Hawaii.

Command arrangements were further refined on Jan. 1, 1959, as a result of the Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1958. Major combatant forces were assigned to the operational command of CINCPAC, who reported then, as now, directly to the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

On Jan. 1, 1972, CINCPAC took on still more responsibilities as he assumed leadership of U.S. military forces operating in the Indian Ocean. Today the Pacific Command stretches from California to the East Coast of Africa and from the Arctic Ocean to the Antarctic.

Presently the CINCPAC staff consists of about 800 Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps officers and enlisted personnel plus more than 175 Civil Service employees.

On Sept. 1, 1972, Admiral Noel Gayler, USN, became the ninth naval officer to serve as Commander in Chief Pacific.

Let's take a look at a few of the countries in this vast part of the world:

First is Maritime Soviet Russia. The military power of the Soviet state is still increasing at an open-ended rate. I'm not one of those who sees Russians, or even Communists, under every bed. And I do not ascribe any motivation or intentions to Soviet Russia. But we must observe the quite extraordinary current military buildup. No fewer than four Intercontinental Ballistic Missile systems, with all of the enormous developmental expenses involved, have just been deployed; and we have recent indications, almost unbelievable, of yet three more kinds of missiles under development; a very long-range submarine-launched ballistic missile, already in Fleet service, with at least two kinds of large nuclear submarines to carry them. Guided missile systems abound as if they were going out of style; two supersonic bombers are operational and at least three kinds of new high-performance fighters are deployed; and they continuously re-equip their enormous armies with all of the latest materiel under development. Hardly a week goes by that we don't see some new Soviet fighting vehicle being introduced. The Soviet Navy story is largely the story of one gifted and extremely effective naval officer, Admiral Sergei Gorschkov, who has been head of the Soviet Navy for 19 years and has brought it from a second-class coastal defense force to a first-class, seven-ocean Navy: operationally capable, technically capable, well-drilled, and designed specifically to interrupt control of the sea. Admiral Gorschkov is not only a leader, but a thinker; and his writings on naval subjects mark him as a naval thinker comparable to our own Admiral Alfred T. Mahan, as well as a most effective leader and

administrator. He understands sea power: the political, as well as the military use of it. He wants it for the motherland and he's well on his way. He has a blueprint; he's effective in carrying it out and he isn't finished yet.

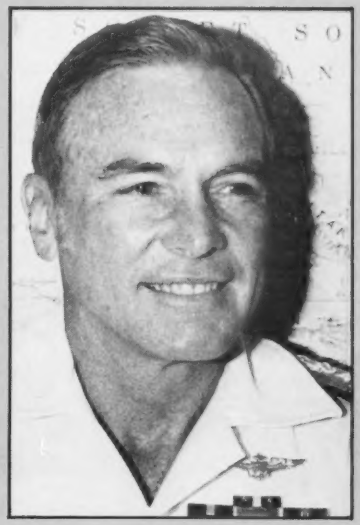
Previously, the Soviet Navy has specialized in submarines, guided missile ships and long-range aviation.

Now, in addition to all else, they are challenging air control with the construction of new aircraft carriers to operate high-performance vertical rising fighters plus helicopters. With forty-odd division organizations opposite China, with its powerful fleet based in the Vladivostok area, and strong integral air forces, the Soviet Navy is a major factor in the Pacific.

NORTHEAST ASIA

Turning to the countries of Northeast Asia, Japan is, of course, our most important ally. Japan is important because of its economic weight, its growing political clout, and its key strategic position, as well as the excellent understanding which exists between the Japanese and the United States.

It is a complementary security relationship, in which each partner contributes to the common security of both countries. For the U.S. part, of course, it is the nuclear umbrella and the capability to deal with long-range threats. On the part of the Japanese and, in my order of importance, first, it is the bases they make available to us, which are absolutely essential; second, access to the great Japanese industrial economy; and third, the defensive contributions of the small, but technically competent, Japanese Self-Defense Forces to the security of Japan. These forces, by Japanese decision, will concentrate on air defense of the Japanese homeland



ADMIRAL
NOEL GAYLER
Commander in Chief Pacific

Admiral Noel Gayler, Commander in Chief Pacific (CINCPAC), directs United States military operations in the U.S. Pacific Command.

As commander of all U.S. Armed Forces assigned to the Pacific, he is responsible directly to the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Admiral Gayler is the U.S. military adviser to the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO), U.S. military representative to the Australia-New Zealand-United States Council (ANZUS) and military adviser and member of the United States-Japanese Security Consultative Committee.

The son of Navy Captain and Mrs. Ernest R. Gayler of Seattle, he was born on Dec. 25, 1914, in Birmingham, Alabama.

Following graduation from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1935, he was accepted and began flight training at the Naval Air Station, Pensacola, Florida in March 1940. Upon completion of his training in November, he was assigned to patrol plane duty.

He was subsequently assigned to Fighter Squadron Three of the USS Saratoga. Following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941, the squadron was transferred to the aircraft carrier USS Lexington which soon sailed for the South Pacific. During this period with Fighter Squadron Three his skills as a fighter pilot achieved for him the honor of becoming the first man in history to receive three Navy Cross Awards.

He was the third naval officer ever to fly a jet aircraft and holds the record for the longest jet flight ever made from an aircraft carrier.

In January 1956, Captain Gayler was given his first ship to command, the USS Greenwich Bay (AVP 41).

The attack aircraft carrier USS Ranger (CVA 61) was his second ship command. Following his promotion to rear admiral he was appointed U.S. Naval Attache to the American Ambassador in London, in August 1960. He served until August 1962.

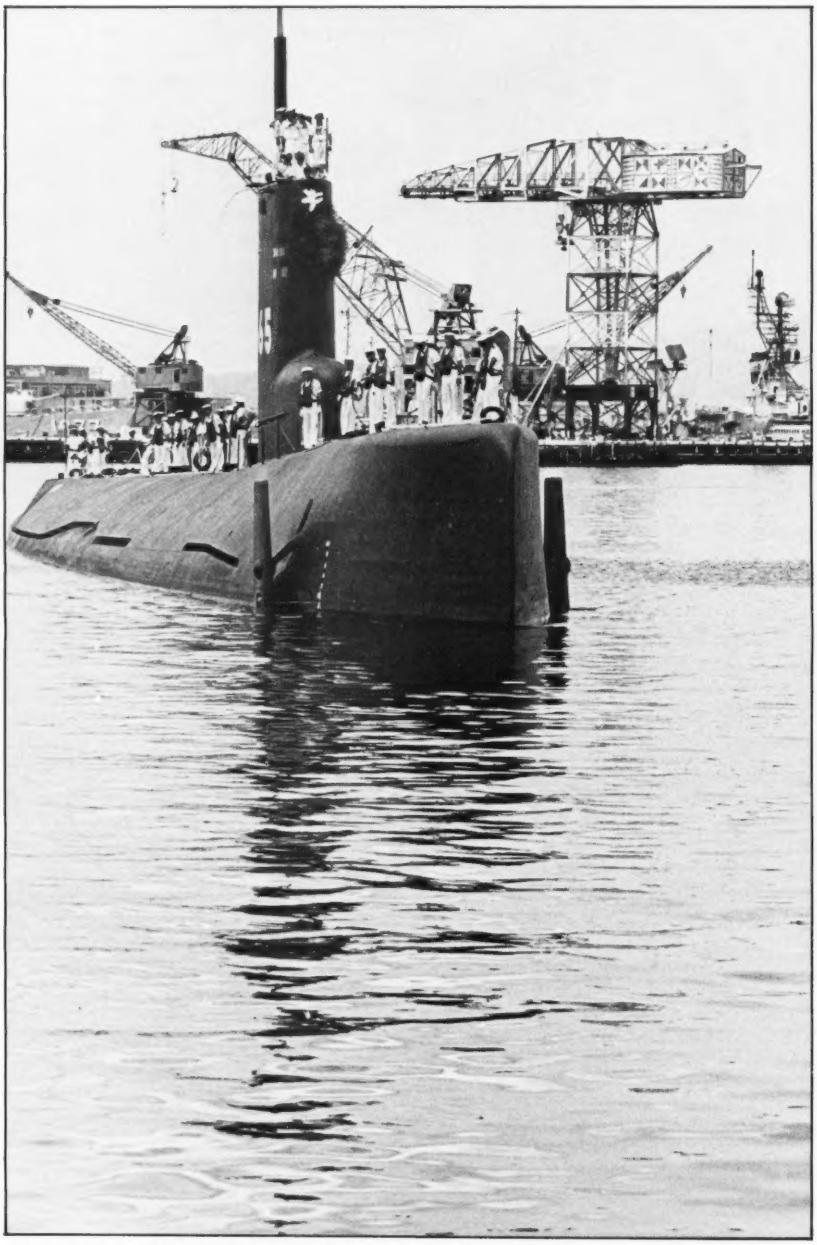
In September 1967, he was selected for the rank of Vice Admiral and assumed duty as Deputy Director of the Joint Strategic Planning Staff at Offutt AFB, Nebraska.

In July 1969, he assumed duty as Director, National Security Agency, Fort George G. Meade, Maryland, where he served until the end of August 1972.

On Sept. 1, 1972, he was appointed to the rank of admiral and became the ninth naval officer to serve as Commander in Chief Pacific.

Upon the retirement of Rear Admiral L.V. Swanson on Aug. 29, 1975, Admiral Gayler became the 25th officer to receive the coveted "Gray Eagle" trophy. This honor is handed to each succeeding senior naval aviator on active duty.

Admiral Gayler's wife is the former Miss Caroline Groves of Webster City, Iowa. The Gaylers have three daughters, Caroline, Anne, and Deborah; and two sons, Alexander and Christopher.



Japanese Self-Defense Forces include naval vessels such as the Submarine Arashio (SS-565), which help provide security for Japan.

and anti-submarine defense and sea surveillance of the waters around Japan. Thus, it is a mission which is clearly defensive, consistent with the Japanese constitution.

TWO KOREAS

We turn to the two Koreas—North and South. The situation there is a bitter and uneasy truce, a military stalemate, but no contest economically. South Korea is winning that one hands down, in spite of the temporary setbacks due to the energy crisis. The Korean talent for hard work and good planning is paying off, unfettered by Communist economic control. As for the military situation, the threat remains and will remain while Kim Il Sung in the North maintains a posture ready to reunify the peninsula by military force whenever he thinks he can do it. I believe that the South Korean forces are in quite good shape to withstand an attack; and the deficiencies that they have, they are moving out to correct now, mostly with their own money. American forces there are an added and needed deterrence against another aggression and are in relation to our security policy as a whole in East Asia. I believe that they should stay there until they are no longer needed.

THE PRC

The People's Republic of China (PRC) is very much in the news these days. Numerically, the PRC has the world's greatest land army, which is disposed both to trade space for time in the event of a Soviet attack, and to meet the PRC's other security concerns. The Chinese Air Force is not small and is concentrated on tactical types, particularly fighters and attack airplanes, and is becoming more competent every year. Its Navy is not small either, running mostly to patrol types and submarines, although there are a few larger ships,

including guided missile ships. The Chinese have a modest theater nuclear capability against the U.S.S.R. and other adjacent Asian nations, but development of an offensive nuclear capability against the continental United States would appear to be several years away. The People's Republic of China, of course, perceives its principal current threat to be from the Soviet Union. As for the United States, our policy is to continue and expand the relationship which we have established with the PRC. I do not believe that offensive Chinese military operations are likely. China will, however, probably continue through party mechanisms to give at least verbal support to revolutionary movements elsewhere in Asia.

INDIAN OCEAN

The Indian Ocean, too, is enormous in area. Sometimes I illustrate this by superimposing a map of the United States on the middle of that ocean. It touches no significant land anywhere. Along the boundaries of the Indian Ocean are some of the largest and most populous regions in the world: South Asia, the Middle East, and East Africa. The complexities there defy thumbnail description. One thing is clear, and that is the sea routes which traverse the Indian Ocean both from the Red Sea (the exit to the Suez Canal) and from the Persian Gulf, where more than 80 per cent of the Middle East oil is shipped, are vital to most of the countries of the world. The essential trade routes are those extending around South Africa to Europe, the trade routes running through the Indonesian Straits to Japan, East Asia and the United States. It is vital that the Indian Ocean remain what it is now — an ocean available for peaceful trade and commerce, and the

A U.S. tank landing ship awaits the reloading of vehicles during a joint U.S. and Republic of the Philippines amphibious exercise.

Fighter aircraft such as this Navy F-4 being launched from the Attack Aircraft Carrier USS Constellation, help maintain open sea and air lines of communication in the Pacific.

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interconnection of all nations. And it is important that no one should perceive that Soviet military capabilities are dominant in the Indian Ocean area. We have no desire to dominate that ocean but we cannot see it fall under the domination of any single power. Our strategy, therefore, is not to maintain a large force in the Indian Ocean area, but occasionally to go in there with a sizable naval force in order to demonstrate that the Indian Ocean is no one's lake. And here is where the tiny atoll of Diego Garcia comes in. It's right in the middle, an ideal place for communications and for observation; potentially a fleet anchorage, a storage place for oil; a few spare parts and a runway to support heavy logistic and patrol aircraft—nothing more. It's a big convenience and a cost avoidance, and it makes sense, but it can in no way be considered to be a major operating base.

Now for our military forces in the Pacific. We have 141,000 Navy, 48,000 Air Force, 57,000 Army, and 68,000 Marines — a total of a little more than 314,000 in this whole vast area. It's not really very much. They are based principally in Hawaii with 43,000, Guam with 9,000, Japan, including Okinawa, with 47,000, the Philippines with 14,000, and in Korea with 40,000. The remainder are principally Navy forces afloat and Navy and Marine units on the West Coast. In Taiwan and Thailand, we are in process of drawing down almost to zero. Our other forces in the theater are very small.

Our principal military concerns are to be able to keep open the sea and air lines of communication, and our sea and air presence, to be able to achieve, if we must, local air superiority and presence, to be able to deter against war at every level.

In summary, I think our objectives can be quite clearly stated:

- To maintain our forward presence.
- To maintain the bilateral understandings with many friends, which collectively mean peace and stability.
- To maintain a no-nonsense stance toward the major military powers, a supportive stance toward the lesser non-aligned nations, and a reliable stance toward our allies.
- To keep up our military strength and to work, to the best of our ability, toward peace and the rule of law in the world.

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